(d) whether any corrective measures are in the offing; if not, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV) : (a) As per the estimates made by the Directorate of Economics and Statistics of the Ministry of Agriculture, the production of cotton has been 108.51 lakh bales in 1997-98, 122.87 lakh bales in 1998-99 and 116.44 lakh bales in 1999-2000. However, the import of cotton has been 7.87 lakh bales in 1998-99, 22.01 lakh bales in 1999-2000 and 22.00 lakh bales in 2000-2001.

(b) Requests were received to increase duty on import of cotton. The Government is closely monitoring the situation to take appropriate action, if any needed.

(c) and (d) To protect the interest of the cotton growers, the Government announces Minimum Support Price (MSP) of Kapas (seed cotton). Whenever the market prices of kapas touch MSP, the Cotton Corporation of India Ltd. (CCI) undertakes Support Price Operation and purchases kapas at MSP, without any quantitative limit, in all cotton growing states (except in Maharashtra where the Raw Cotton Monopoly Procurement Scheme of State Government is in operation). The loss, if any, incurred on account of support price operation is reimbursed to the CCI by the Government. Therefore the question of loss to the cotton growers or the procurement agency does not arise. In addition to this, the Government has launched the Technology Mission on Cotton to improve the productivity and quality of cotton.

Introducing Co-operative and Contract Farming

1974. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government proposes to introduce co-operative and contract farming, in view of declining average land holding in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) how far small and marginal farmers would be benefited by this move; and

(d) whether the contract farming would result in more exploitation of small and marginal farmers by land owners ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV) : (a) to (c) In the National Agriculture Policy, it is stated that private sector participation will be promoted through contract farming and land leasing arrangements to allow accelerated technology transfer, capital inflow and assured markets for crop production, especially of oil seeds, cotton and horticultural crops. It is also mentioned that the Government will provide active support for promotion of cooperative form of enterprise and ensure greater autonomy and operational freedom to them to improve their functioning. No specific scheme, however, has been initiated by the Government to introduce co-operative and contract farming.

(d) farming on contract basis is purely voluntary decision of any farmers.

Production Cost and Realisation Prices of Crops

1975. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that in view of the trends in the cost of production of different crops *vis-a-vis* realization in terms of their prices, the agriculture, is not a paying proposition; and

(b) the cost of production of major crops, item-wise and crop-wise, *vis-a-vis* their sale price, during the last three years ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV) : (a) Analysis of data, for major crops like wheat, rice and sugarcane grown in certain States like Punjab, Haryana, U.P. etc., shows that average realization of the farmers is higher than the Cost of Production.

(b) A statement of cost of production data based on the data collected under the Comprehensive Scheme for studying the Cost of Cultivation of Principal Crops is annexed.